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EDUCATION, No. I.

THE subject on which it is our purpose to offer some remarks is so trite, that nothing but its importance could induce us to call the public attention to it. And even this would not be a sufficient motive, were we not persuaded that in this country the interests of learning are greatly neglected. At the same time, while this neglect is so flagrant as to attract the notice of even superficial observers; every one is making the acknowledgement that the diffusion of sound learning is of unspeakable importance, and indeed of indispensable necessity for the well-being of our republic.

While these remarks are made, it is not forgotten that we have in this state a Literary Fund, which is expected to be very rich; and from the judicious appropriation of which, great public benefit is expected. It may be so. But we are not sure of it. The fund has done nothing as yet; and we do not know that those who have the disposal of it, will ever agree upon any plan of public education.—Nor is the apprehension without foundation, that disputes on this subject will produce weariness and disgust; and that in this temper of mind, some demagogue will dissipate the whole in some visionary scheme of economy. We would fain hope for better things; but “blessed is he that expecteth nothing—for he shall not be disappointed.”

Some consideration of the subject has produced the conviction that learning is in a much lower state in this country at present, than in former times. And it may not be unprofitable to present, in part at least, the reasons of this belief.—This country was settled, chiefly, by men who fled from political and ecclesiastical oppression; men whose minds were too enlightened, and whose hearts were too stout to yield to the encroachments made by a corrupt court, and a venal clergy. Our forefathers were among the very best, in the nation from which they came. And they brought with them, their learning, as well as their courage and piety. Many of the clergy who came over were men whose minds were as richly stored with various knowledge, as those of any of their contemporaries. They, moreover, had been placed in circumstances well calculated to afford a powerful stimulus to their understandings; and we may be well assured that they examined with all care and diligence, principles for the sake of which they were obliged to make the most costly sacrifices. The few works which these worthies have left to posterity, exhibit a fair character of their powers and attainments. And although they are written in the quaint and tedious manner of the age, they afford proofs of profound and just thinking and laborious investigation, which may well shame the sciolists of the present age. These remarks, as far as relates to intellectual improvement and lofty feeling, apply with great

exactness to the cavaliers, that made their escape from Cromwell and his minions, who under the garb of puritanism and republican principles had risen to power, which was imperial in every thing but the name.

It is principally to the Clergy of former times that we are indebted for the literary establishments which have preserved a semblance of learning in this country. The zeal manifested by them on this subject, affords no inconsiderable evidence of their attainments. The smatterer, and the wholly illiterate, all who have no experience of the benefits of a good education, will make no exertions or sacrifices to erect and support literary institutions.

The remnants of former libraries have also afforded proof to the writer, that the men who used them were of a literary and intellectual stature considerably beyond that of the present race. The implements of literature wielded with ease and dexterity by them, were too ponderous for us.

Vix illa lecti his sex cervice subirent

Qualia nunc hominum producit corpora tellus.

And here, we cannot avoid expressing the deepest regret that so many valuable collections of books should have been scattered, and destroyed; devoured by vermin, or torn up as waste paper. Many melancholy instances of this might be recorded; but only one will be mentioned. A copy of the greatest work of the most literary age, perhaps, of Great-Britain—a work which has long, and deservedly been considered by Biblical critics, as the glory of that nation, we mean Walton's Polyglott Bible, was lately torn up by a shop keeper, in a little town on James river, to wrap up coperas and alum, pepper and ginger. Had the owner known even his pecuniary interests in this case, he might have, in all probability, obtained in Europe one hundred pounds sterling, for what was thus treated as brown paper!

Another fact will be mentioned, not at all creditable to the literature of Virginia. Of the few valuable old libraries which have escaped the fate mentioned above, several have been bought up in the way of speculation, by northern booksellers, and sold in their towns. And thus all, or nearly all of the excellent collections made by our more learned forefathers, have disappeared from among us. And in their place we find hardly any thing but broken sets of Cyclopædias, Reviews, popular poems, Novels, and a volume or two of *elegant* sermons.

Again, Law, Physic, and Divinity were once regarded, and were constantly termed learned professions. It was taken for granted that a good store of learning, and wholesome intellectual discipline were necessary to qualify a man for entering on the study of any one of these professions. Accordingly, Physicians were not bold empiricks, lawyers were not mere pleaders, and preachers were not mere declaimers. They were men of deep research, of laborious study. We have no intention of wounding the feelings of any man, or set of men; we have no particular individuals, nor sects nor parties in view, when we declare our deliberate opinion that, with some highly honorable exceptions, the case is not now as it once was. The writer of this, has

known many instances in which a mere smattering in English Grammar and Geography, and a few weeks spent in reading Ferguson's Lectures, was thought sufficient preparation for the study of Law or Medicine; and it is believed that professional gentlemen have frequently found that Law and Medical Dictionaries were not brought down to a level with the capacities of their students, and have been obliged to write in blank books kept for the purpose, definitions of terms, which the pupils could not understand as explained in the Lexicons. Indeed a very respectable Physician lately affirmed, that although he had frequently received pupils into his family, he rarely, if ever, had found one sufficiently acquainted with the mathematics, and the various branches of Natural Philosophy, to understand the explanations given of the most ordinary functions of the animal economy. As for the Clergy,

“Who will may preach, and what they will.”

Many honestly think that learning is quite unnecessary for them.—Some foolishly imagine that all who are called to preach are inspired; and some wickedly oppose all efforts to afford to candidates for the ministry literary qualifications; justly believing that the more ignorant the advocates of Christianity, the more will religion be brought into contempt.

It is well known that the Bill for the establishment of primary schools, Academics, Colleges and an University in Virginia, was lost only by a very small number of votes in the Senate last winter. Had this scheme succeeded, the question is put to every thinking man in the state, could native Virginians or Americans have been found to fill the various professorships by law established? As an answer in part to this question, a fact will be stated. Some liberal and patriotic gentleman, not long since, made a donation of twenty thousand dollars for the establishment of a Greek professorship at Cambridge, Massachusetts. The Governors of the University accepted the donation, elected a professor, and very prudently sent him to Europe to qualify himself for his office! Where should we find professors of ancient languages, of Mathematics, of Natural Philosophy, Astronomy, Natural History, Logic, Moral Philosophy, &c. &c. among ourselves? Where is the man who deserves the name of a Civil or Military Engineer? Where is the Scientific Architect?

But there is another view of the subject—A man who has received a thorough education, is so imbued with a love of learning, that it affords him amusement in his hours of leisure, and solace in times of affliction. This remark was made so long ago, and has been so often repeated, that it may now pass for one of the dictates of experience. But where are the men among us, inspired with this passion for liberal learning? In town, gentlemen when not engaged in business, seek company where they expect something *nice* to eat and drink; and in the country, during a rainy day, or in the long nights of winter, they dose over the newspapers, or some political pamphlet—And if there is here and there one who pretends to rather more than ordinary reading, he subscribes for the *Edinburgh* or *Quarterly Review*; and per-

haps reads the whole, except reviews of new editions of Latin and Greek Classics and of works of science.

If we descend from this class, to men in humbler walks of life, we shall find a most deplorable ignorance. The experience had by persons actively engaged as distributors of Bibles, is truly melancholy. Often and often, within the knowledge of the present writer, the Word of eternal truth has been offered to citizens who confessed that they could not read—And there are many more to whom reading is a task of great difficulty and labour. There is every reason to believe too, that this number is encreasing—that the population of the country is outgrowing the means of information afforded to the people; and that we are in a fair way to have in this republic—where every man ought to read and know perfectly the Will of his God; the charter of his liberties; and the laws of the land,—Aye, in this republic we are in a fair way to have what may truly and properly be termed a *populace*—a mere ignorant, untaught, immoral rabble, who will give themselves to the control of any man who will give them a morsel of bread to eat, and liquor to drink.

The evidence need be urged no farther to prove that the interests of literature are greatly neglected; that in this respect we are degenerating from the wisdom and worth of our ancestors. It seems to me high time that those who have understandings to discern, and hearts to feel, should come forth and make a vigorous effort to effect a REVIVAL of LEARNING in Virginia.

In our next we shall endeavour to point out the causes which have produced the state of things here exhibited.

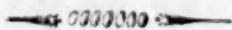
SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

It is with very great pleasure that we announce the formation, by an almost simultaneous movement, of three Sunday Schools in the city of Richmond. The Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterians have engaged in this very commendable charity; and we have reason to hope that many who were heretofore permitted to roam about our streets and commons, associated with the vilest, and forming habits to fit them for the Penitentiary or the gallows, will be imbued with the doctrines of religion, and the precepts of morality; while at the same time they will receive such intellectual improvement, as will qualify them to be useful citizens. And this is not the limit of our views. We trust that many will by this mode of instruction be made, wise unto salvation; and, purified by the grace of God, and the efficacy of divine truth, be qualified for the employments and joys of the just made perfect.

We have mentioned *different* denominations as engaged in this charity—but we hope and believe that no party spirit will be suffered to insinuate itself here. In New-York, their institution, the most useful and extensive of the kind in this country, is called the Sunday School Union. It is a common work of love. The books used in teaching are particularly adapted to this state of things. Nothing is taught but the universally received doctrines of the Reformation; and the

young scholars are brought up with a feeling of love to all Christians. This is as it should be. It is hoped that there will be a Union of this sort in Richmond: and that the untaught, undisciplined poor, will hereafter bless the charity of the pious who afforded them heavenly instruction.

[*This subject will be resumed hereafter.*]

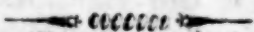


Extract of a Sermon preached at the funeral of John M. Shepherd, of Hanover.

"It is very far from my intention to pronounce an eulogy on the deceased. It is unworthy of a minister of the Gospel to flatter the dead, to gratify the living. Our duty is to derive from mournful occasions like the present, the salutary instruction which they are well calculated to afford. With this view, and this alone, I offer the following statement. Our deceased friend for a long time, went in and out among you. He was well known in the various relations which men usually sustain; and it is not too much to affirm that he discharged the duties resulting from them with a diligence, a fidelity, and integrity not often surpassed. You knew how exemplary he was as a husband; how affectionate as a father; how kind as a master; how true as a friend—You knew with what strict justice he discharged his debts to others, and with what charity he regarded the afflicted—These neighbours joining in all the expressions of grief manifested by his nearest kindred, testify in what estimation he was generally held. Did this worthy man, looking back on a life of morality so exemplary, with a self-righteous spirit, depend upon his good works as a cause of acceptance with God? We know that he did not. We know that he renounced every hope, save that founded on the atonement and intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ. This was the rock of his salvation; and from this he was not moved in the day of trial. Faith in the Saviour enabled him to go through the valley of the shadow of death without fear; nay, rather with holy confidence. It was this which enabled him to say "I am now done with this world; and I have nothing to do, but to die." Our friend, when once his conscience was awakened, and his mind enlightened to discern the holiness of God, and the spirituality of his law, discovered that those works by which he had gained the esteem of his fellow-men, were deplorably deficient in the sight of God; and that he must have a better righteousness than his own to entitle him to Heaven. He therefore went before God as a sinner, and made the divine mercy in Jesus Christ his only plea. Pardon and grace, we have reason to believe, were afforded, and hence resulted that peace of which the Christian alone is made partaker. Do we say, "Let us die the death of the righteous; and let our last end be like his?" Indulge, my brethren, this desire: and learn from the occasion by which it is now excited the sure way to avoid disappointment. Receive *him* as your Saviour, "who of God is made unto us, wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:" "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved"—"for there is none other name given under heaven among

men, whereby they must be saved" but that of Jesus Christ. Cast away, then, all confidence in your own works; and come as "miserable sinners" to Christ. Thus will you live in comfort, and die in peace. Were it safe to rely upon any righteousness of our own, none of us, perhaps, have so lived, as to have surer ground of hope than our deceased friend. If he then was convinced that without a Saviour he must perish, surely we ought not to delay for a moment; but now, in this day of grace, this accepted time, when heavenly mercy invites, to enter the ark of safety, that we may escape the impending vengeance

But let none mistake the doctrine here taught. It is as fatal to under-value, as to over-rate good works. We *over-rate* them, when we substitute them in place of the merits of Christ. We *under-value* them when we are not "careful to maintain" them, as the Apostle says, and to abound in them. In truth, the fruit of faith is the proper evidence of its existence. And we may easily know what that fruit is, by considering that "faith worketh by love, purifieth the heart, and overcometh the world." Indeed, faith, and the love which is connected with it, are the only principles which ever did, or ever will produce works which God will acknowledge to be good. Faith, while it contemplates the divine promises, and anticipates the joys of the blessed, raises the affections from earth to heaven; suppresses the selfish and sordid passions and pursuits of men, purifies the heart, and calls forth the most powerful opposition to sin in every form. We do not then discard good works. We charge men, as they love their souls, not to neglect them; and in the same manner we warn our hearers not to slight the Saviour nor suffer any thing to usurp his place. And in doing this, we only say what we verily believe our departed friend would say, could he return from the eternal world and address us—This was his dying testimony; and he left it for the benefit of his children and friends—If they are wise, they will duly regard it. But this doctrine depends not on human authority for its support. The word of eternal Truth declares, and in the most solemn manner enforces it. We neglect it at our peril. "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved—he that believeth not, shall be damned." Be entreated, brethren, to attend to the "things that belong to your peace, before they are forever hid from your eyes." Let it not be in vain that God in his mercy, and by his providence calls you this day.—With lively, obedient faith, regard the testimony of God, and do his commandments, that you "may have right to the tree of life; and may enter in, through the gates into the city." And may the peace of God that passeth all understanding, preserve your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.



A Plea for Sacramental Communion on Catholic Principles—By J. M. MASON, D. D.—New-York, Whiting & Watson, 1816.

By directing the attention of our readers to this work we hope to render some service to the cause of Christian charity. The divisions which have long prevailed in the church have been its standing re-

proach; and more than any other cause, perhaps, have prevented the progress of divine truth. "Behold how these Christians love one another," was the exclamation extorted from ancient Pagans. "What is the reason," said a Mahometan to the missionary Mr. Thom, "that Europeans are all said to be Christians, and yet they hate one another?" The contrast is in the highest degree painful, and mortifying—Nor have the disciples of Jesus Christ in this country lived in such a way as to escape the censure of the follower of the Arabian impostor.—Facts might be adduced without number in confirmation of this remark—but who requires proof?

Christians of the Presbyterian denomination in these states, are subdivided into several classes. The great body of them derived their origin from the church of Scotland, and are united now under the direction of the General Assembly, which meets annually in Philadelphia, on the third Monday in May. Another division traces its ecclesiastical descent to the Seceders from the Scottish church. And a third, is derived from the Reformed church of the United Provinces, and are usually denominated "The Dutch Reformed." These churches although separated by a shade of difference hardly perceptible, have maintained separate communions, and manifested to each other much reserve and coldness. Some years ago, however, circumstances, which need not be detailed, led two of these differing churches in New-York, to worship for a time in the same house, although at different hours of the day. This event brought the members to an acquaintance; acquaintance generated love; and love produced a desire of intercommunion at the table of the Lord. This desire was indulged to their mutual gratification, and profit. But an event so auspicious, so worthy of the professed disciples of the Lord Jesus, excited considerable sensation among numbers who remained under the influence of old prejudices; and called forth pretty strong censures of some of the parties concerned. It is only historical justice, however, to add, that those who belong to the General Assembly, as far as the writer knows, to a man approved of the conduct of their brethren, and rejoiced to behold prejudice yielding to the force of Christian love.—The temper with which this transaction was received, and the censure pronounced on account of it, was the occasion, it is believed, of the volume now before us. The principal part of this account is taken from the introduction.

The work itself, in which the doctrine of Catholic Communion is defended, is divided into three parts—I. The Scriptural Doctrine—II. Facts—III. A Review of Objections.

The first part is very brief, but very decisive. We cannot, however, forbear expressing some regret that the learned author did not pursue this part of the subject to greater extent. The reason of this feeling is, that the fundamental principle on which the whole doctrine rests, although explicitly taught in Scripture, is not considered according to its importance by numbers of professing Christians. The great principle is justly, and briefly stated by the author in the short proposition that **THE CHURCH OF GOD IS ONE.**—The proof of the proposition rests on I. Cor. xii. 12, 14. *As the body*

is ONE, and hath many members; and all the members of that one body, being MANY, are ONE BODY; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we ALL baptised into ONE body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been ALL made to drink into ONE Spirit. For the BODY is not ONE member but MANY. From this passage, compared with the context, the author educes the following indisputable principles, as laid down by the Apostle, concerning the natural body:

"1. That the multitude of its members does not destroy its unity, nor their relation to it as a whole—all the members of that one body, being MANY, are ONE body: v. 12.

"2. That their union with the body is the foundation of all the value, beauty, and excellence, of the members in their respective places. v. 15—24.

"3. That the efficiency of the members consists in their mutual co-operation as parts of a common whole—that there should be no SCHISM in the body. v. 25.

"4. That from their union with the body, there results, by a divine constitution, a communion of interests; a sympathy of feeling, and a reciprocation of benefits—that the members should have the same care one for another: And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. v. 25, 26.

"The use of this similitude Paul declares to be an illustration of the unity of the church, and of the intimate communion of believers. *Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.*" v. 27.—It is with perfect justness remarked "that the principles of this argument are general; and of course are applicable to every thing which tends to cherish among Christians a *party feeling*, at the expense of weakening the sense of their union, or of interrupting their communion, as members of the body of Christ; and were intended to be so applied." This remark is supported by a train of reasoning, too compact to be abridged, and too long to be inserted in our scanty limits. The results are stated by the author in the following terms:

"1. The body of Christ is one.

"2. Every member of this body has, by a divine constitution, utterly independent of his own will, both union and communion with every other member, as infallibly as hands and feet, eyes, ears, and nose, are, by the very constitution of the physical body, united together as parts of a whole, and sympathise with each other accordingly.

"3. The members of this body of Christ have a common and unalienable interest in all the provision which God has made for its nutriment, growth, and consolation; and that simply and absolutely, because they are members of that body. Therefore,

"4. The members of the church of Christ, individually and collectively, are under a moral necessity, i. e. under the obligation of God's authority, to recognise each other's character and privileges; and, consequently, not to deny the tokens of such recognition. Sacramental communion is one of those tokens: therefore, the members of the church of Christ, *as such*, are under the obligation of God's autho-

nity to recognise their relation to Christ and to each other, by joining together in sacramental communion. Nor has any church upon earth the power to refuse a seat at the table of the Lord to one whose "conversation is as becometh the gospel." If she has, she has derived it from some other quarter than her master's grant: and founds the privilege of communion with *her* in something else than a person's "having received Christ Jesus the Lord, and walking in him." Let her look to herself, and see what account she shall be able to render of her usurpation."

The general conclusion here drawn can, with no consistency be denied by Christians who admit that there are other churches besides the particular one to which they belong. For "other true churches hold their right to all church privileges by the very same tenure by which we hold ours: and consequently, the members of those churches have the very same right to the table of the Lord, as our own." (page 18.) "The sacramental table is spread. I approach and ask for a seat. You say "No." "Do you dispute my christian character and standing?" "Not in the least." "Why then am I refused?" "You do not belong to *our* church." "*Your* church! what do you mean by *your* church? Is it any thing more than a branch of *Christ's* church? Whose table is this? Is it the *Lord's* table, or *yours*? If yours, and not his, I have done. But if it is the *Lord's*, where did you acquire the power of shutting out from its mercies any one of his people? I claim my seat under my master's grant. Show me your warrant for interfering with it." (Page 19.)

The reasoning of which this is a specimen is confirmed by an enquiry into the nature of the sacraments.

"Sacraments are holy signs and seals of the covenant of grace, immediately instituted by God, to represent Christ and his benefits; and to confirm our interest in him: as also to put a visible difference between those that belong unto the church, and the rest of the world; and solemnly to engage them to the service of Christ, according to his word."*

"Assuming this account of the sacraments to be scriptural, they are clearly the common property all Christians under the whole heaven.

"1. "They are signs and seals of the covenant of grace." Now, all believers, in all places of Christ's kingdom upon earth, have their share in the mercies of that covenant: therefore, all believers, having the *thing signified*, have a perfect right to the *sign*.

"2. They "represent Christ and his benefits, and confirm an interest in him." Therefore, all believers, being partakers of Christ and his benefits; in other words, having an interest in him, are the proper recipients of those ordinances whose use is to "confirm" that interest to their faith.

"3. "They put a visible difference between those that belong to the church and the rest of the world." Therefore, they who belong unto the church of God, who are known and recognised as Christians have a right to this badge of discrimination, and are bound to put it

* Confession of Faith, chap. xxviii.

on and wear it, as they shall have opportunity, in whatever part of God's church they may happen to be. Consequently, they who so narrow the use of this badge, as to make it distinguish not merely the church from the world; the follower from the foe of Jesus Christ; but the church from the church, the follower from the follower, the friend from the friend of Christ Jesus; and thus to exhibit them as having separate *Christian* interests, corrupt—not the form and circumstances—but the matter, but the substance, of the holy sacraments.

"4. They "solemnly engage believers to the service of Christ according to his word." Therefore all who have entered into his service; and mean to regulate their lives by his word—and what Christian does not?—have a right to the sacramental encouragement, commensurate with the sacramental oath. Which of them can innocently refuse the oath? To which of them may the encouragement be innocently denied? And who art thou, sinful flesh, escaped by thy master's grace from the damnation of hell, that darrest—yes—DAREST, to keep back from the vow and the consolations of thy master's table *any* whom thou acknowledgest to be the objects of his love?

"It results,

"1. That they who have a right to sacramental communion any where, have a right to it every where; and, conversely, that they who have not a right to it every where, have a right to it no where.

"2. That no qualification for such communion may, by the law of Christ, be exacted from any individual other than *VISIBLE CHRISTIANITY*; i. e. a profession and practice becoming the gospel, without regard to those sectarian differences which consist with the substance of evangelical truth."

It will be necessary for us, for want of room, to defer the further examination of this work until another occasion. The subject is one of very great importance. The peace of the church, the honour of Christ's kingdom, and the welfare of souls, are deeply involved in it. Those who have carefully studied the scriptures, expect the coming of the time when all who belong to the church of Christ, will be united as with one heart, in the holy purpose of diffusing the knowledge of the Redeemer, and making known the saving health of the gospel to all nations. The signs of the times seem to indicate the propriety of such discussions as form the subject of this volume. We most sincerely wish that they may subserve the interests of divine truth, and promote brotherly kindness.

Besides, it can be no light matter to rend the unity of the church of Jesus Christ; and keep asunder those who should be bound together by the cords of divine love. Wherein that unity consists, and what is a breach of it, deserves serious consideration. That very crude notions prevail on this subject is obvious from the language ordinarily heard in relation to it. When, for instance, an individual changes his religious connections, the common mode of expression is "He has changed his religion"! as though the various sects among Christians, instead of differing in modes of divine service, and unessential particulars in doctrine, worship different deities, through different

Mediators: or, as though religion consists only in external observances. Language, such as this, betrays either ignorance, of which we should be ashamed, or prejudice and hostility in various denominations, still more worthy of shame. "*Changed his religion!*" Is it not Christianity that we all profess? Has God more than one church on earth? Is there not *one* Lord, *one* faith, *one* baptism, one God and Father of all? And are not all Christians brethren, begotten of the same Father, redeemed by the same Saviour, sanctified by the same Spirit, nourished by the same "sincere milk of the word;" having the same spiritual friends and foes, the same hopes and fears, sorrows and joys; and do they not all expect to form one glorious company in the heavens, to dwell in the same everlasting habitations, and rejoice forever in the fulness of the same eternal joy?

To be continued.

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COMMUNICATED FOR THE CHRISTIAN MONITOR.

Remarks on Pliny's Letter to Calpurnius Tiro.

EPISTOLARY writing possesses many features that conspire to render it interesting. And a happy talent for this species of composition is no inconsiderable accomplishment. In the familiar correspondence of intimate friends who, in addition to respectable literary attainments, possess a lively imagination and a heart animated by pure sentiment and affection, we are favored with very correct and interesting exhibitions of human nature.

The Epistles of Pliny, the Roman Consul, are deservedly admired for the spirit and elegance which enliven and adorn almost every subject on which he writes. They, in general, give a most pleasing idea of the learning, and talents, and virtues of their author. Yet amidst our admiration of him, we cannot forbear regretting that his superior mind was not illumined by the rays of "the bright and morning star," which had, about sixty years before his birth, risen on the benighted world. He had himself seen the invincible fortitude of the Disciples of Jesus Christ, and had borne testimony to the purity of their lives: that Religion, however, which rendered them superior both to the vices and to the sufferings of the world, he had deemed a depraved superstition. While they rejoiced amidst their afflictions, he, amidst the honours and affluence of an exalted station, languished, at times, under inconsolable distress.

Corellius Rufus, a friend of his, died; died, too, by his own act. His death was, in itself, a source of distress; in its manner, of anguish. Pliny makes some just and weighty reflections on the inducements his friend had to endeavour to preserve his life; until he should, in the course of Providence, be called to leave the world. Besides his self-complacence and high reputation, he mentions the tender endearments of a wife, a daughter, a grandson, and sisters, and many and faithful friends. "Still it must be confessed," say Pliny, "that he had the highest reason to determine him to this resolution." The resolution, he means, to forsake his wife and other endeared re-

latives and many faithful friends; the resolution to violate every relative obligation, every social virtue, and to banish himself, by his own act, from all the fair scenes of this world, and to plunge into the unknown abyss of eternity, where he might, for aught he knew, wander a solitary spirit, shrouded in more than midnight gloom, the victim of ceaseless, unavailing anguish. But "he had the *highest reason* to determine him to this resolution," and "the highest reason will to a wise man always have the force of the strongest obligation." How melancholy that any man, having such inducements to live, as the friend of the Consul had, should be under the necessity of killing himself! How dire must that necessity be, how invincible! How *singular*, too, must be the reasons that could render—I had almost said, this "*deed without a name*," an act of *Heroism*! Alas! Corellius Rufus must kill himself, must become a Hero, because he had received, among other paternal possessions, the *gout*!

The ties that bind a man to wife, daughter, grandson, sisters, many and faithful friends, ties "close twisted with the fibres of the heart," are all dissolved—by the gout! This furnishes to a *wise man* the highest reason for Suicide and Heroism!

"Speak comfort to me," says Pliny to his correspondent; "Speak comfort to me, I entreat you: not by telling me that he was infirm; this I know; but by supplying me with some arguments that are *new and resistless*, that neither the commerce of the world, nor the precepts of the Philosophers can teach me. For all that I have heard, and all that I have read, occur readily to my mind; but are by far too weak to support me under so heavy an affliction."

While I regret to see this elegant writer inculcate the lawfulness of suicide, and commending it as an act of heroic fortitude; I can not avoid considering how much the pure principles of Christianity would have rectified his sentiments, added an inexpressible energy and grace to his writings, and enabled him to shed the enlightening and vivifying radiance of his piety on all affected by his influence.—The testimony he had left in favour of the pure and peaceable lives of the primitive Christians, reflects much honor on the religion they professed and experienced and practised. But what a happy opportunity was presented to him of becoming a distinguished benefactor of mankind, and especially of the household of faith! Enjoying the confidence of his Prince, and armed with no inconsiderable authority, he might have opened a sanctuary for the martyrs of Jesus. He might have embraced them in the arms of brotherly affection, and sitting with them at the feet of the Great Teacher, learned those lessons of heavenly wisdom which would have guided him in the way, not to the feigned Elysian Fields, but to the regions of substantial and interminable enjoyment.

The appeal of Pliny to the benevolence and wisdom of his friend for consolation in his distress, was the dictate of native feeling; and it is the resort of every man of sensibility in a similar situation. The commerce of the world and the precepts of Philosophy were entirely unavailing; he felt their vanity in the time of trial; and confessed his need of some superior considerations to console his sorrowing

heart. Considerations, however, such as were requisite for this purpose, were offered only in that mild, unobtrusive and heaven-descended religion which he regarded as a low superstition. He had seen the unimpeachable rectitude of its votaries, but knew not its origin; he had seen their patience and serenity under the severest sufferings, and he charged them with obstinacy. Had he approached and enquired into the cause of that resignation and hope which were manifested on the most trying occasions; the sufferer might have replied—

“ I see a hand you cannot see,

“ I hear a voice you cannot hear.”

“ This hand of omnipotent love affords support while the heaviest calamities assail me; this voice of divine consolation cheers me amidst the sorrows of this vale of tears. This hand is extended to snatch me from the crumbling brink of ruin; and shall raise me from my bed of dust to a seat of honor in the realms of the blessed: this voice assures me that my guilt is cancelled, and my name graven on the heart of the King of Saints; and that my enjoyment of his favor shall never know a period. I see the hand of my Saviour that was nailed to the cross; it offers to me the crown of eternal life; I hear the voice of my Saviour that uttered, in faltering accents, a prayer for his murderers; it pleads for me in heaven, and it speaks to me in my momentary affliction.”

The Gospel only could have enabled the afflicted Corellius Rufus to endure, with the meekness and confidence of resignation, those sufferings that stung him to the madness of suicide: the Gospel only could have furnished the disconsolate Pliny with that influence which he needed, not only to soothe, but also to sanctify his sorrow. He, who “ was dead and is alive forevermore,” is the Resurrection and the Life of all his Disciples.

“ In his life

I see the path, and in his death the price

And in his great ascent the proof supreme

Of immortality.”

PHILOKALOS.



WESLEYAN METHODIST IN JAMAICA.

[This Society of Christians, whose zeal affords an edifying example to other denominations, has made considerable efforts to promote religion among the inhabitants of the West-India Islands. And in the spirit of Christian charity, has paid particular attention to the poor blacks in that region. In this labour of love every benevolent heart must wish them abundant success. It is, surely, enough for the bodies of the blacks to be held in slavery—let their souls be emancipated from the bondage of sin. Yet the planters in the islands, in many cases seem to regard the missionaries with jealousy; to misrepresent their motives, and oppose their progress. It is hardly possible to imagine more monstrous cruelty than this. We can easily suppose circumstances which may make a man a slaveholder, and render it the most embarrassing question in the world, what he shall do with his slaves.—Such an one is perhaps a great-

er object of compassion than his bondman.—But when a master, from false notions concerning interest, from love of filthy lucre, extends his power beyond the requirement of bodily service; binds, the understanding in chains of ignorance; excludes the light of heavenly truth; hushes the voice of divine mercy; and prohibits the administration of such comforts as the gospel affords to the desolate and wretched, he is cruel and unrelenting beyond the power of language to express. We say *false* notions of interest—because experience has decided the point. The best slaves are christians. From the time that the *runaway* Onesimus was converted by the instrumentality of Paul, and sent back to his master, this has been proved to be true. The writer of this has seen happy evidence of the salutary effects of Christianity among his own household servants; and once he had the pleasure of ministering to a Christian Congregation, in which there were one hundred black communicants, many of them able to read, and almost every one tolerably instructed in the doctrines of Christianity. The beneficial influence of this discipline was acknowledged by the owners of these slaves, and by the neighbourhood at large.—A very intelligent widow lady, who possessed a considerable number of them, acknowledged that “the *preachers* were more useful to her than *overseers*.” It must however be confessed that appearances are frequently such as to mislead careless observers. There is a species of fanaticism, misnamed religion, which, when it possesses the mind, produces pride, obstinacy, self-importance, and, in a word, renders the subject of it, seven fold more a child of the Devil, than before. But this, instead of being an argument against attempts to instruct our slaves in Christian doctrine, is decisive in their favour—because, we cannot prevent these poor creature from holding some form of religious belief; and surely it is not a matter of indifference whether this be true or false. While on this subject, we would again invite the attention of our readers to “*Sermons to Masters*” lately re-published by the Rev. William Meade, and for sale by Messrs. Fitzwhylson and Potter of this City.

We are much pleased to find that the Methodist Brethren in the West-Indies have stood up like men against the opposition made to them; and have publicly refuted the calumnies cast upon them. This will appear from the following memorial presented by the missionaries to the House of Assembly, in Jamaica, in November last.]

JAMAICA.—HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY, *Friday, Nov. 1.*

A Memorial of the Missionaries of the Methodists, presented and read, as follows:—

JAMAICA, S.

“To his Honour the Speaker and the Members of the Honourable House of Assembly,

“The Memorial of the Missionaries of the People called Methodists, in said Island,

“HUMBLY SHEWETH,—That your Memorialists are in connexion with that Body of Religious People in Great Britain, Ireland, and other

parts of the world, usually called Wesleyan Methodists, and have been appointed to the Ministry of the Gospel by the Authorities of their denomination in England.

“That the avowed and real object of your Memorialists, and that of all the preachers of their connection, is one; and which, in the exercise of their functions, they endeavour to promote to the utmost of their ability, namely, to render their hearers, in temper and conduct, upright and humble Christians. Their design is wholly unconnected with politics; it is purely moral and religious, and their principles and discipline are altogether on the side of peace and tranquility, being absolutely opposed to every thing that would endanger the quiet of the land.

“That your Memorialists are conscious of the most unimpeachable integrity and disinterestedness, and are well assured of the useful effects of their labours, in the reformed lives, the humble and peaceful deportment, of hundreds of their people, as well as by the concurrent testimony of many respectable witnesses.

“That, nevertheless your Memorialists feel themselves obliged to state that much misconception, misrepresentation, and censure have arisen with regard to the character and object of their mission; that it has been blended with other associations or institutions, and confounded with every description of religious teaching; and that, in consequence, your Memorialists have from time to time suffered much opposition in their endeavours to exercise their calling.

“That your Memorialists, however, are humbly confident that there is nothing in their system of doctrines and discipline, which can justify these opinions, and the consequent opposition they experience. With regard to their doctrines, they enforce (agreeably with the Scriptures) on the minds of the people, together with the fear of God, subjection to the higher powers, obedience to magistrates, speaking evil of no man, contentment, quietness, and prompt attention to business; in like manner they exhort servants and slaves to count their masters worthy of all honor, to be obedient to them, and to please them well in all things, not answering again, not purloining, but shewing all fidelity, and a singleness of heart to fulfil their duty, and in respect to their discipline, they do not recommend or even countenance immoderate or frequent fasting, nor do they hold or sanction any religious meetings at improper hours; they disapprove of a regard to dreams and superstitious fancies of every kind; they endeavour to make men happy, contented, and industrious, not miserable, ambitious, or slothful, being studious to render them fruitful in every good word and work, that they may always possess a solid hope of eternal felicity.

“That your Memorialists are clearly and fully persuaded that their doctrines and discipline, with the manner of enforcing them, have a direct and powerful tendency to promote general concord, and that there is nothing in their tenets subversive of good order or public prosperity; nor, although the best system may be abused, has a single instance occurred to our knowledge of their members being concerned in any one of the evil designs, or disorderly and discontented associations, by which the public has lately or at any time been alarmed.

“Further, that your Memorialists have been objected to on account of the contributions made by their societies for the support of the mission, and the nature of their connexions in England: to which they respectfully answer, that they neither receive nor wish for any thing inconsistent with the means, inclination, and welfare of any member of their societies, nor have they more than a reasonable and necessary provision for food and raiment, and unavoidable contingencies and even this is supplied them by the stewards of the societies, who receive the contributions from the people, and state a regular account of the whole, subject to the inspection of the leaders and elders of the societies. With respect to their friends at home, Memorialists receive no salary or emoluments from them, nor any instructions but what are usually printed and made public, and are altogether unconnected with the affairs of Government; nor have they any correspondence with political parties. In short, they are not influenced, by their office, duty, instructions, or inclination, to interfere directly or indirectly with the legislation of the colony.

“And, lastly, that your Memorialists, willing to have their mission better understood and appreciated, could cheerfully lay before your Honorable House, a full and accurate account of the rise and progress, the forms and government, of their societies; the nature, qualifications, appointments, and duties of the offices of their preachers, stewards, and leaders, with every other particular concerning their economy: but they apprehend such detail would be found inconveniently tedious: Memorialists, however, humbly and confidently trust that the statement now submitted will be found worthy the attention and entitled to the favourable opinion of your Honourable House.

“Your Memorialists, therefore, most earnestly solicit your Honourable House to relieve them from the unfavourable impression which has so long operated against the integrity, good faith, and success of their mission, by indulging them with a greater degree of confidence and credit than has hitherto been manifested, and by affording them such facility, in the exercise of their Ministry, as to your Honourable House may appear reasonable and expedient; for which benign interference they will feel the liveliest gratitude, and in all their proceedings unceasingly study to deserve its continuance.

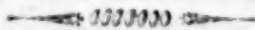
“JOHN WIGGANS,

“JOHN SHIPMAN,

“WM. WHITE.

“Chapel-House, Kingston, Oct. 31, 1816.”

Ordered to lie on the table.



The Juvenile Cent Society of Columbia Academy, in Bergen, (N. J.) have recently paid *twenty-five dollars* to the Treasurer of the General Synod of the Reformed Dutch Church, for the purpose of aiding the education of indigent Students of Divinity at the Theological Seminary of that denomination.